DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 046 476 LI 002 518

AUTHOR Howard, Edward N.
TITLE An Inquiry Into Leased Space for School Administrations in Public Library Buildings.
INSTITUTION Vigo County Public Library, Terre Haute, Ind.
PUB DATE Jan 71
NOTE 12p.

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS *Cooperative Programs, Interagency Cooperation, *Library Facilities, *Public Libraries, *Schools, *Surveys

ABSTRACT

Letters were sent to all state departments of education or public instruction soliciting information and comments concerning the sharing of a portion of the public library building with other agencies such as public school administrations. Twenty-two replies were received from nineteen states. Over 50% of the respondents were in favor of the proposal under the following conditions: (1) the library keeps ownership of the building, (2) space lease is for a specified period of time and is recoverable by the library if needed, (3) the building is designed as a public library facility, (4) the library's functions would not be hampered, (5) the venture would help defray capital outlay and provide space for future needs, (6) access to school space be separate from library entrances, (7) utility and maintenance costs by shared, (8) sufficient parking be provided, (9) telephone services by separate and (10) availability of federal funds be investigated. The strongest opposition among the respondents came from members of the library profession because past experiences in extra-library cooperation are disheartening. (NH)

ED 046476

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

AN INQUIRY INTO LEASED SPACE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIONS IN PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDINGS

by Edward N. Howard, Director
Vigo County Public Library

January, 1971

How cooperative are public libraries in sharing a portion of the public library building with other agencies such as public school administrations? Not very, if the responses from nineteen states give a true picture of this state-of-the-cooperative-art.

Dr. Iverson Bell, member of the Library Board of the Vigo County Public Library, sparked the inquiry at the September, 1970, meeting of the Board when he commented on a recent trip to Kansas City, Kansas, where he visited the administrative offices of the school corporation on an upper floor of the Kansas City (Kansas) Public Library. Since the Vigo County Public Library soon will be constructing a new main building, Dr. Bell suggested that the library director explore the feasibility and desirability of providing additional space in the building for leasing to the Vigo County school administration.[1]

Letters were sent to all state departments of education or public instruction soliciting information and comments. Twenty-two replies were received from nineteen states. Several of the responses came from the state library as an agency in the department of education; in a few

---

[1]The members of the Board of the Vigo County School Corporation also serve as members of the Board of the Vigo County Public Library, although the two boards are legally autonomous with separate powers. Dr. Bell is currently president of the Indiana School Boards Association.

LI 002 518

instances both the department of education and the state library responded. In addition, the public library directors in Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, provided detailed information and recommendations.[2]

A bit of humor was added to the survey by the ALA headquarters soon after the letters of inquiry were mailed. The letters did not identify the Kansas City library by name, merely saying that a board member had visited "administrative offices of a school corporation in the midwest which occupied an upper floor of the public library." It seems that ALA received several phone calls asking the name of the public library "in the midwest" that had such an unusual arrangement, and ALA did not know!

On the other hand, this surveyor was not aware that the public libraries in <u>both</u> Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, had school administration offices on upper floors. So, initially having mistakenly written to and obtained information from just the one that Dr. Bell did <u>not</u> visit, the library director was both surprised and embarrassed to have this pointed out (although courteously and kindly) at the next board meeting.

<u>Some Advantages</u>

Although many of the respondents stated that they had little or no experience in cooperative building use, most agreed that the idea had merit. Ernest Stone, Alabama State Superintendent of Education, put it this way: "This is the kind of innovative approach which might be helpful to all of us in solving the ever increasing problem of adequate facilities."

---

[2]Willard K. Dennis, Director of Libraries, Kansas City Public Library, 625 Minnesota Ave., Kansas City, Kansas
Stephen S. Kirk, Librarian, Kansas City Public Library, 311 East 12th St., Kansas City, Missouri.

Advantages perceived by the respondents are as follows:

"There would be the advantage of having in close proximity reference tools and periodicals for the use of the (school) officials." --Alabama

"In the past, discussion of leasing space has been considered in order to finance a large enough building for future growth. . . . it is a method to get a complete building for 10-20 years expansion without the community feeling that it has overbuilt." --Alaska

"I personally think this is an excellent idea. Any physical nearness is bound to promote further cooperation. This has been our experience in Hawaii where the entire public library system is a part of the Department of Education." --Hawaii

". . . from experience I would like to commend the cooperative use of public library buildings." --Hawaii

"Providing the public library has sufficient space, I see no reason why school district administration offices might not be in the same building. It would seem that there could be some economy in terms of use of special kinds of office equipment -- multilith presses, publicity and public relations personnel, and so forth. In a number of instances the public library's processing department also processes the materials for the school libraries." --Michigan

"I do not know of a library which leases part of its facility, but if the office space is designed to be re-arranged and utilized by the library as the library expands, and if each function does not interfere with the other due to their juxtaposition, I should think that this might be a way of building for the future while costs are relatively low, utilizing the income to help retire construction bonds and then expanding into the office area as the space is needed. I should think that it would be crucial that the building be first designed as a library with future expansion well planned and provided for. The office space would then temporarily be superimposed." --New Jersey

"My feeling would be that if the library is to share its facilities with another agency, it should be a user-oriented agency open to the public whose activities complement those of the library. For example, an adult education center would tie-in very nicely with library programs." --New Jersey

"We do combine in several instances headquarters of a library system and the central library and feel this is very desirable. However, we also recognize that in a period of years it may be necessary for the library system to move into other quarters when the central library needs to use the additional space for its own purposes." --New York

"I have been thinking personally for some time that it would be favorable for a library to rent space that would help to defray construction costs and perhaps provide income as well as providing for the expansion space. However, I believe it would be necessary to plan this space very carefully to insure maximum future use, efficiency and flexibility." --New York

"I have no problems in our arrangement with the administrative offices on the third floor of this library with the exceptions noted later. Because of our relationship it is convenient to step on an elevator and ride to the third floor to consult with school administration, the business office and school supervisors. We do take advantage of having the school's audiovisual department in this building by utilizing their personnel and equipment to clean and inspect our 16mm films. The business office takes care of all of our financial obligations for which we pay a stipulated sum each year. This arrangement includes from our budget the proportional use of custodial care, utilities and maintenance, insurance, etc. Paying the school business office for handling our financial matters is less expensive than if we had to do this ourselves." --Kansas City (Kansas) Public Library (The Vigo County Public Library likewise contracts for financial services from the Vigo County School Corporation)

And Some Disadvantages

The respondents voiced an equal number of disadvantages, problems, and pitfalls, candidly stating both the pros and cons as they saw them:

"The difficulty of this arrangement is to get the space back when the library needs it." --Alaska

"Since a public library is supported by tax funds, would there be danger of criticism from governing bodies about the use of capital outlay funds to provide commercial space to rent? . . . I would express my reservations concerning such an arrangement." --Georgia

"One note of caution--the arrangement should anticipate future library growth into the leased space, and safeguards should be established, lest the camel take over the tent." --Hawaii

"Although the relationship between the library and the Board of Education has been harmonious, it is my personal opinion that you can eliminate any administrative problems that might arise by not providing leased space for any other government agency in your new main library." --Maryland

"I know of at least one case where the public library is in a school district administrative office building, and I must say, I do not think it has worked out to benefit the public library." --Minnesota

"Although I am unfamiliar with the organization of Indiana schools, I assume that the school corporation is a non-profit agency. If this is the case, it would probably be more difficult to receive as high a rent as you might like because of the general attitude that non-profit agencies warrant special consideration." --New Jersey

"Because of the situation in New York State where a public library can be legally chartered on the basis of a school district we have had several proposals for combining school administrative offices and the

public library. Specifically because of various problems that we could see, we have advised against this for some of the following reasons:

1) Both school administrative services and public libraries have been growing very rapidly and both have had consistently increasing space needs. It seemed to us that it would be very difficult for two growing agencies to exist in the same building without creating various complications for one or the other at different times.

2) Because the public library by its nature requires land in an area where costs are apt to be very high and requires a type of structure that is apt to be of a more expensive type of construction because it is a publicly used facility, it could lead to heavily increased costs for the school administration which does not have the same requirements.

3) Because the library as a public service agency is open so many hours more than the school administration offices there also seems to be a considerable problem of supervising and controlling access to the upper part of the building to prevent malicious vandalism as well as difficulties in requiring higher level of lighting, heating, and so forth.

Of course, many of these situations could be worked out if the library owned the building and definitely leased space to the school administrative offices. However, in New York because of legal requirements in the case of the school district public library the school district owns the building and it might not be possible to dispossess them easily at such time as the library might require the additional space." --New York

"The basic fault with the arrangement, from the State Library's point of view, is that the total cost of the operation of the building, including the facilities used by the school district, are charged to the public library." --Pennsylvania

"Several things I would caution you about are:

1. The school office space, as well as the library space, should have ample room for expansion. We have found that for whatever reason that the personnel requiring offices on the third floor has increased considerably and with their attendant services have overflowed into an area on our ground floor which was supposed to have been for future closed stack areas.

2. There should be ample parking provided for the exclusive use of public patrons. Our experience has been that much of the space that was originally designed for the public is being utilized by the employees on the third floor, and at least once a week meetings are held on the third floor which brings an influx of many more cars than the space can accommodate. This overflow parks in the drive, disregarding the no parking signs. This problem could probably have been alleviated if we had designed the entrance of the drive at the rear of the building with three lanes, which would have allowed for such parking and still had in and out lanes.

3. The overall economy of the building is equipped with a central switchboard operated on the third floor. Apparently we economized too much, because the switchboard is overloaded a great deal of the time, which must result in a frustration to the people desiring to get in either to the education offices or to the library. In connection with this, certain lines are hooked up for night connections when the switch-

board operator is not on duty. I believe that we would not have had the problem if we had had separate trunks of lines into the library. This would cost considerably more in view of the fact that someone would have to be paid to attend such a switchboard however small, plus the differential that would have been encountered.

4. The personnel office for the schools does operate on Saturday which leaves the third floor open without monitoring the elevator and stair entrance because the switchboard is closed. This would allow persons up to no good to get into our closed stack area--in fact to any part of the library, if they so chose, without our knowing it." --Kansas City (Kansas) Public Library

". . . I should like to give you some quotes from a letter of our former librarian who was here at the time the building was being planned and erected:

We are finding it very difficult to determine engineering maintenance and repair costs and divide them equitably. Central services can scarcely be worked out easily in spite of all of the cooperative planning we hear about in government.

The provision of parking spaces for patrons, and the School District office callers has caused much concern. Often the spaces have been completely filled by the greatly expanded Federal programs now maintained by the School District and Board of Education.

Expansion of one unit over the other within the building, or through an addition, has become a major issue.

The internal security, through the different hours maintained by the School offices and the Public Library, has caused a great deal of concern.

There is no saving in combining these units. The greatly expanded floor space here requires a much more expensive high-speed type of elevator to serve the upper floors and a more involved freight elevator system." --Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library

LSCA -- Yes or No?

Federal funds up to 45 per cent of construction costs are authorized by the Library Services and Construction Act. The awarding of construction grants obviously depends on the availability of funds, and is based on the library's priority rating that is determined according to criteria such as expansion of service area, interlibrary cooperation, etc. Would joint use of a library building be approved? If so, would the library be given a higher priority assignment because of this type of cooperation?

Opposing views were expressed by the two respondents who mentioned LSCA:

"It is entirely possible that such utilization of the building would

be considered very favorably by the federal government which encourages such cooperative programs under the Library Services and Construction Act." --Alabama

"I am assuming that your library is not anticipating the use of Title II LSCA federal funds. Our regulations would prohibit the library from participating in federal funds for the kind of building you propose." --Minnesota

Other Comments

General comments of interest though not in the category of advantages or disadvantages are as follows:

"Your letter opens the door to many useful thoughts, and I would appreciate hearing of any instances where a public library building is used in the way your letter suggests. The library, as a public agency, could well provide space, if available, for other governmental agencies on a lease basis." --Florida

"It has been the policy, however, to recommend that school district offices be housed in leased space usually in the downtown area where the alternative is to house such an office in a high school or elementary building." --Iowa

"There are several newer buildings in which some of the space has been leased to other government bodies." --Iowa (Apparently the buildings referred to are not public libraries)

"It seems to mean that whether this is an advisable course for the Vigo County Public Library would be mainly dependent upon the contract which might be negotiated with the School Corporation."--Kansas

"As I said before, I think the problem concerns sufficiency of space. Knowing how both public libraries and school district administrative offices grow in services and personnel, it may be an impossibility to build a building which will support this kind of activity in the future even though it looks sufficient at the time it is built." --Michigan

"Since Vigo County is really suburban Terre Haute, you can anticipate continued growth. My advice would be the following:

1. Design the space so that it can eventually be used by the County Library without structural changes.
2. Rent to the School District on a fixed term basis, so that when your library grows in its need for space, you can take over the space occupied by the school administrative offices.
3. Make it clear from the beginning that the School District will be asked to vacate as soon as the County Library needs the space for public library purposes." --Minnesota

"I think that you know that there have been articles in the library literature dealing with this situation in Kansas City, and I think you know that probably most of the people who write about this matter feel

that Kansas City has not had a satisfactory public library system, nor has it had a satisfactory school library system because of this joint operation, and those who would recommend improvements for the future in Kansas City would recommend generally that the public library system be separate from the school district." --Missouri (This is in reference to the single school-public library system in Kansas City, Missouri; comments on joint use of the building are given elsewhere.)

"I believe that we have found, in general, that multiple use of the same facility by a library and municipal office is not the best arrangement. Usually, a municipal or county office building is planned and the library is sort of stuck on to the complex. Ordinarily, the complex is located away from the business or shopping center. Since not very many people visit a municipal office during the course of a day, the library suffers by being away from the action." --New Jersey

"It might also be possible to develop separate heating and lighting systems and separate entrances and exits, for the tenant, so it would not be the library's responsibility in any way." --New York

"Formerly, the administrative offices of the local school districts were located in school buildings (in a few instances, in the county courthouse), but there is a current trend towards district-owned administrative buildings either on school sites or on district-owned property elsewhere in the community." --South Carolina

"Although I am generally not in favor of combination school/public libraries, (i.e., two agencies operating on two sets of philosophies attempting to operate out of one facility), I realize that at times county agencies must consider working together and sharing some of their space." --Wyoming

"We are also involved in planning, equipping and stocking new buildings, and in the administration of the funds specifically for school library programs such as Title II. The school does pay for the handling of these materials at the rate of $1.00 per item." --Kansas City (Kansas) Public Library.

Precedents

Several examples of comparable facilities, either existing or planned, were cited:

"This may have been either the Kansas City (Mo.) Public Library or the Kansas City (Kansas) Public Library. There may be others of which I am not aware. In both of these cases the public library is operated by the local school board; and the libraries occupy the lower floors of the buildings." --Kansas

"I believe that when the Battle Creek Public Library (Willard Library, 73 Capital Avenue NE) was remodeled a year or so ago the school district administrative offices were included in the building. The other examples of school district administrative use of a public library building have

been in Lansing and Kalamazoo where the Supervisor of School Libraries had her office in the public library building. This office was moved over to the Board of Education office in Kalamazoo two or three years ago and the Director of School Libraries in Lansing will move into the newly renovated school offices during the summer or fall of 1971." --Michigan

"In reply to your letter about providing rental space for school administrative offices in your new County Library Building, I must admit that I know of no other instance. Tourist bureau, Chamber of Commerce, yes. School district, no." --Minnesota

"In the City of St. Joseph the administrative offices of the public school system are on the upper floor of the building which houses the main public library. The building is actually owned by the public school system and for years the public school system has rented space on the lower floor to the public library. This has been purely a landlord-tenant relationship and except for certain disputes regarding jointly used facilities and the need for one party or the other to have more space, apparently there has been no really significant difference here than might be found were the library located in a privately owned building. To our knowledge the relationship between the public library and the public schools in St. Joseph is really no different from what one would find in a typical American city.

The other situation in Missouri is the much better known and much more significant situation, and that is in Kansas City, Mo. In Kansas City, as I am sure you probably know, the public library is operated by the public school system. It is a school district library. For years the two organizations have occupied the same building and in the construction of a new main library building for Kansas City the school board decided that the administrative offices for the school district would be located in the upper floors of the public library building. In addition to this arrangement at the main library a number of the branches of the public library system are located in public school buildings and serve the dual role of school library and public library branch. So far as the joint use of the building is concerned, I suppose there are no serious problems in that the main building is really two buildings in one and there is no great conflict over the use of the building, and probably if public library system were to be separated legally from the school district there would be no reason why the two organizations could not continue to jointly use the single building downtown."--Missouri

"At this time, two county libraries are constructing facilities in which a second floor will be used partially or completely by the county superintendent of schools and his staff. However, to my knowledge, there is no leasing arrangement. New Jersey is probably unique in its structure concerning the county superintendent of schools. The county superintendent of schools and his professional staff are responsible directly to the State. The county is responsible for providing the county superintendent with working facilities and clerical employees. Hence, no leasing arrangement is necessary since the county Board of Freeholders has the responsibility for providing quarters for both the county superintendent and the library. The two county libraries which will share their facilities (in at least one case, later utilizing the office space for library purposes as the library expands) are now under construction.

They are the Hunterdon County Library in Flemington and the Cape May County Library in Cape May Court House." --New Jersey

"On a visit to Sweden several years ago I visited the new Gothenberg Public Library. This building was planned to provide 25% future expansion. At that time the library rented out basement and upper level space. However, these had been so planned in the original construction that there was no communication with the library itself although in the future it would be a simple matter for the library to break through when they needed the space." --New York

"In Pennsylvania are two buildings which have housed such offices and one that has made space available to county school offices:

1. For many years, the offices of the Erie School District occupied the second floor of the public library building. They were moved from the building a year ago. Perhaps the director of the library, Mr. Kenneth G. Sivulich, can give you information about the practicality of the arrangement. Mr. Sivulich's address is Erie Public Library, Box 1631, Erie, 16507.
2. The offices of the Beaver Falls School District are on the upper floors of the Beaver Falls Library. Mr. Abdul A. Khan, is Director of the Carnegie Free Library, 1301 Seventh Avenue, Beaver Falls, 15010.
3. When the Greensburg Public Library renovated an abandoned post office for use as a public library, they agreed to permit the county school administration to house the second floor of that building. I do not know whether or not the school people have moved into the building. The librarian of the Greensburg Library is Mrs. Helen K. Yockman, 237 South Pennsylvania Avenue, Greensburg, 15601.

Both the Erie Public Library and the Beaver Falls Library are financed wholly by the school districts." --Pennsylvania

"At this time we do not have a situation such as you suggest; however, one of our county libraries in the state is in the process of a building program and is considering the possibility of leasing part of their space to the school district film library. Please contact Mr. Ken Dowlin, Librarian, Natrona County Public Library, Casper, Wyoming, 82601, for further details." --Wyoming

Summary

Over 50 per cent of the respondents were in favor of the proposed joint use of a public library building if the following conditions were met:

1. The building is owned by the public library.
2. Space is leased for a specific period of time and is recoverable when needed by the library.
3. The entire building is planned structurally as a public library facility.

4. Such joint use would in no way interfere with or inhibit the library's function.

5. That the joint venture does in fact help defray capital outlay and provide space for future expansion.

6. Access to the school administration space is separate from the library entrances and controlled by the school administration.

7. Provision is made for school administration to adequately reimburse the library for utility and maintenance costs.

8. Sufficient, specifically assigned parking is provided for school officials, staff, and visitors.

9. Separate telephone service is installed for the school administration offices.

10. The availability of federal funds under LSCA and other acts is thoroughly investigated and taken into consideration.

Only 12 per cent of the respondents were opposed to the idea, with the remaining 37 per cent ambiguous or noncommittal.

Public librarians generally do not look with favor at the idea of sharing the public library building with anyone. The strongest opposition among the respondents came from members of the library profession, but not without justification. Past experiences in extra-library cooperation are disheartening. More often than not, the camel did "take over the tent," or the politically powerless public library got the shaft in one way or another.

The voice of cooperation in use of the main public library building is rarely heard in libraryland. One recent instance was brought to the surveyor's attention by J. Gordon Burke, Associate Editor, American Libraries:

"In terms of function, any kind of mixture in a building may be justified and the more unusual, the more successful the library will be. This raises the interesting idea of leasing space in a library complex of this type to underwrite the cost of the building--an idea that does have some potential. The danger, of course, is that if the library is improperly conceived, the total purpose of the library can be subverted."[3]

The sharing of a portion of a public library building with the administrative offices of a school corporation remains an uncommon idea, but one that would seem to merit serious consideration for Vigo County.

---

[3] Antoine Predock, "Branch Library Permutations or the Socially Oriented Library," MLA Quarterly (Missouri Library Association), June, 1969, p. 140. Copyright 1969 by Antoine Predock.